

Are You Ready to Move Out of Your Parent's House? How to Know If You're Ready to Leave Home

By Jodi Morse

Moving out of a parent's home can be a very difficult choice for anyone to make, no matter what their age is. In our culture, living with a parent for too long is not often considered acceptable. People expect you to go to college straight from high school, where you will dorm and then find an apartment with one of your friend's or the person you are in a relationship with. They do not think that you should move back home, even though it can take years for someone with a college degree to find a decent job in their field. Are you ready to move out, though? Here, we will take a look at some of the things that you should be sure to ask yourself before making the final decision to move out.

Do I have a stable job? If you are interested in moving out, the most important thing that you should have first is a stable job. You will need to consider if you will have one in the location that you are interested in moving to, and you shouldn't automatically assume that you'll be able to find one because of your education, experience or credentials. Without a job that you will be able to earn a stable income from, it is likely that you will have an extremely difficult time living on your own and will probably find your way back into mommy and daddy's home.

Can I pay my rent? Just because you have a stable job does not necessarily mean that you are able to pay your rent. Let's face it - rent can be very expensive these days. While we would all love to rent that gorgeous four story home with a built-in pool, many of us cannot afford to do so. You may need to make some sacrifices and settle for something that is beneath your normal standards.

Will I be able to afford other expenses? Aside from your rent, there are other things that you will need to worry about paying for. When the bills come, are you going to be able to afford the cost of the cable, internet, telephone and any of your other monthly expenses? This does not even include the cost of your car or the gas that needs to be put into it.

Am I willing to make sacrifices? There will be times when you may need to make a sacrifice when you are living on your own. Are you willing to give up some of the extra luxuries that came along with living at home? Can you give up some of your frivolous spending habits? Although clothes and other luxuries may seem necessary, they are something that you will be able to do away with, though it will probably take a good amount of effort.

Should I consider a roommate? Although you may not necessarily want a roommate, having one can make the entire process of moving go a whole lot smoother. If you are able to split the rent and other apartment-related expenses, there is a better chance that you will be able to afford moving out. Of course, it is important to choose a roommate who will live up to his or her word of paying the rent each month.

Am I emotionally ready to leave home? When you think about leaving home, how do you feel? If the only emotions that you come up with are negative ones, maybe you should reconsider making a move just yet. You do not want to move into a situation where you will automatically have bad feelings associated with it. It's best to wait until you feel a little bit more positive about making the move.

Do I feel pressured to leave home? What is your reason for wanting to leave home? Is it because you just feel pressured, whether it be by your friends, parents or a boyfriend or girlfriend? Deciding to move out should be something that you do for yourself. Too much influence from anyone can be negative, as it may mean that you are not yet ready to make the decision on your own.

These are just some of the many things that you should be sure to take into consideration before choosing to move out. The best thing that you can do is wait until you are ready. Keep in mind that you will need to sign a contract when you rent an apartment, whether it is only for six months or if it is for years. No matter what the case is, you should make sure that you really want to move out and that the decision to move out is not just a spur of the moment one. It is becoming much more "normal" for people to continue living with their parents until they have reached a later age, mainly due to the high cost of rent and other utilities. Overall, moving out is never a decision that you should rush yourself into making.

Reflection Questions

Name: _____

1. When does your family expect you to move out on your own?

Do you think this view goes with American culture? Why or why not

2. What do you think is the ideal age for a person to move out? Why?

3. What type of “stable” job do you hope to find when you are ready to move out? How many hours do you estimate you will need to work as well as the wage you will need to earn?

4. What other expenses do you anticipate come with living independently?

5. Knowing that money will be “tight”, what things in your life right now would you be willing to “give up” to save some extra money every month? What things would you not be able to give up?

6. What are at least two positive and negative consequences of choosing to live with a roommate?

7. If a young person feels pressured to leave home because of parents, what might be some solutions to stay another year after high school?